

MESSIAH - SON OF MAN/SON OF GOD, 7 pgs

The Messiah (anointed, Gk. Christ) was the designation of the one whom God promised to send as king to deliver His people from oppression and establish His kingdom. The Jews in NT times took the prophecies concerning Him **literalistically**, expecting a political figure to physically wrest them from the Roman empire and return them to their lands in where the kingdom would again flourish as in the days of David. They had Jesus crucified for claiming to be the Messiah. Before His crucifixion Jesus most often referred to himself in the third person as the Son of Man, a designation that refers to more than His uniqueness as a human being. *Son of Man* is actually an exalted title of sovereignty [observe in the Gospels how Jesus expressed His sovereignty under the guise of this title] that Jesus used to mask His true identity as the Son of God, which refers to His unique relationship to God the Father. [He often addressed God as *Father* and referred to Him as *My Father*.] This study uses word and theme association to trace the coming of Jesus the Messiah beginning at the time of the kings of Israel.

Israel was a union of 13 tribes named after 11 of the descendants of Jacob's sons and 2 of the descendants of Joseph's sons. Since the tribe of **Levi had no land apportioned**, the union was composed of 12 territories. The nation continued united through the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, after which time the **10 northern tribes embraced a different king who then built his own temple**. Because of disobedience, God brought the **Assyrians** to conquer the northern kingdom (722 BC). For the same reason, He later brought the **Babylonians** to conquer the southern kingdom. In 605 BC Nebuchadnezzar defeated a coalition of Assyria and and besieged Jerusalem. He deported the population and thus exiled them from their lands in 3 stages: In 605 BC he ransacked the temple and took Daniel for training in the king's service; in 597 Ezekiel was taken; and in 586 BC Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed.

In Babylon, God gave Nebuchadnezzar a dream of a bright and colossal statue (with parts composed of different materials) that is completely destroyed (**Dan.2:1, 31-36**).

As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth, (34-35)

God also showed Daniel the dream and gave him the interpretation of it as representing 4 great empires (the first being the Babylonian empire) whose memory He completely erases by the coming and spread of His own everlasting kingdom. In fact by picturing four major world empires as a single statue, God is commenting on the fate of all kingdoms of men in this world throughout history.

And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this (44-45).

From this we learn that God intends to take over the whole world by establishing a different kind of kingdom that will be permanent and for His people only. In **Dan.4**, God humbles Nebuchadnezzar and teaches him something about His sovereignty and kingdom.

... I blessed the Most High, and praised Him who lives forever, for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation ... He does according to His will...and none can stay His hand ... (4:34b-35).

[There is no **indefinite article a** in either Greek or Hebrew. It is used in English to smooth out the translation. Omission of the **definite article the** stresses the quality or character of its referent - great God" in **Dan.2:45** and son of man" in **Dan.7:13**]

Later, while serving another Babylonian king, God gave Daniel a more detailed dream about the same things. This time the great empires were represented by 4 great **composite beasts** and there was a behind-the-scenes glimpse of God and His plans (**Dan.7:2-8**).

*As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened (**Dan.7:9-10**).*

Notice the depiction of the holiness of God and theme of judgment (also in the previous dream as the destruction of the empires).

*I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and He came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed (**13-14**).*

Anyone with knowledge of the New Testament will recognize this one like a Son of Man" as Jesus ascending to heaven after his resurrection where God presented to Him an indestructible and everlasting kingdom of people loyal to Him. [*Clouds are associated with the majesty and glory of God.*]

The last beast was different from the 3 previous ones and **represented a worldwide kingdom**. It had 10 horns that represented 10 kings, the last of whom was different from the others.

*As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom...But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them" (**21-22, 26-27**).*

Here the focus is upon the saints as losing in battle, then upon Divine intervention, being vindicated, and receiving the kingdom to rule over.

At the close of the book of Genesis, before the exodus, there had been a period of silence, when there was no word from God lasting some 400 years. The Egyptians enslaved the descendants of Abraham, but during that period, the Jewish tribes grew very much larger. God raised up the prophet Moses who delivered the people from slavery through a series of miracles and judgments. So it was that after the last of the Old Testament prophets, Malachi, there came another such period during which there was no prophet in and no word from God. Then, out of the wilderness John the baptizer came bringing a warning from God, preaching that **the kingdom of God was eminent - about to break out upon the world**. He portrayed the coming Messiah as a conqueror bringing judgment upon the nation of and granting amnesty to all who join with Him by repenting of their sins. ***Unless you prepare a welcome for Him by real repentance resulting in a changed life, there will be judgment upon you and your leaders.*** No wonder the people were *in expectation*. John proclaimed that every one who did not repent would be removed, cut down like unfruitful trees in an orchard and burned. His is a baptism of water depicting repentance. **Jesus would bring a baptism of fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, to clear His threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire” (Lk.3:2-17).**

Once Jesus had become known for His miracles and teachings, He asks his disciples 2 questions, (Mt.16:13-18). Who do the people think the Son of Man really is [implying that the designation Son of Man is masking His true identity]? Who do you think I really am? Peter answers the second by asserting *You are **the Christ, the Son of the living God***. Jesus confirms that Peter is correct saying, ... on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Here Jesus confirms the fact of His divine messiahship with an allusion to His Kingdom and the spiritual nature of it - the rock that was divinely appointed to smash the feet of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan.2). It will be a kingdom unlike any other beginning in the days of the last kingdom envisioned in the dream, conquering the whole earth, delivering His people from hell and death. **This kingdom would surpass all others, not by the power of military might, but by the love of God that rescues His people from sin and death unto everlasting life (Jn.3:16; Col.1:12-14).**

He goes on to warn the disciples not to reveal His true identity (v.20) and speaks of something that must take place [Gk. *dei* – it is necessary. Identifies a requirement for fulfillment of an overall plan.], His coming abuse by the Jewish leaders (elders, chief priests, and scribes) in , His murder, and resurrection (v.21). A parallel passage reads, *the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected ... (Mk.8:31).*

Jesus continues by explaining what these facts mean in terms of the His return in judgment.

the Son of Man is going to come with His angels in the glory of His Father, and then He will repay each person according to what he has done (Mt.16:27).

A parallel passage emphasizes His return in even stronger terms.

when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels ... (Lk.9:26).

This is followed by an account of the unveiling of Jesus' true glory to three of the disciples.

He was transfigured before them, and His face shown like the sun, and His clothes became white as light...a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, This is My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him. (Mt.17:2-5). Again Jesus commanded them to

keep His true identity secret, *Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead, v.9*

Jesus in answering the Pharisees inquiry about **when the kingdom of God would come (Lk.17:20)** told them that it would not have a physical presence as they expected. He went on to instruct His disciples about the future. Once again His suffering, rejection (v.25), and physical absence (22-24) are mentioned. Mostly **He spoke of the coming judgment and called it the Son of Man's day**. On **that day** when He is revealed (24, 30-31), a swift destruction would overtake people in the midst of normal life as in the time of the flood and of (26-32). Nevertheless God has and will rescue His people from His hand of righteous judgment (34-35).

So **Jesus referred to himself as the Son of Man rather than as the Christ to hide His true identity and avoid arrest** until His mission was completed and His time to die had come. Near the end of His time on earth, Jesus indicts the scribes and Pharisees (Mt.23:13-36), laments over Jerusalem (v.37), and speaks of the destruction of the temple (23:38-24:2). His disciples understand these to be references to judgment connected with Jesus' *coming*" and *the close of the age (Mt.24:3)*, both of which are an integral part of the coming of the of the kingdom. [Jesus had already spoken of the end of the age (13:39, 49) and would again (28:20). He had also spoken of His coming as the day when the Son of Man is revealed (Lk.17:30) and would again speak of it (Mt.24:27, 37, 39, 44).] In a vivid picture of judgment,

all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send out His angels... (Mt.24:29-31). When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne (25:31).

Finally, Jesus is arrested and in response to prodding by the high priest, acknowledges that He is **the Christ**, the Son of the Blessed and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven (Mk.14:61-62).

He is then falsely accused, abused, mocked, crucified by the Romans under pressure by a Jewish mob, and raised from the dead just as He foretold. **Jesus reveals Himself as the one true ruler from that time on.**

Now the eleven disciples went to , to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him ... and Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me (Mt.28:16-18a)

Not only had Jesus predicted the mock trials, His murder, and resurrection, **He also foretold His ascension into heaven where He is glorified, and of His return.**

what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before (Jn.6:62).

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself that where I am you may be also (14:3).

I am going to the Father (v.12).

now I am going to Him who sent Me (16:5).

A little while, and you will see Me no longer; again a little while, and you will see Me (v.16).

I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father (v.28).

And now, Father, glorify Me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You before the world existed (Jn.17:5).

Before ascending, Jesus again spoke about the of (**Acts 1:3**) and his disciples, still not understanding the nature of the kingdom Jesus spoke of, asked,

Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to (v.6)

... as they were looking on, He was lifted up and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of , why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven (9-11).

There are only 3 places in rest of the New Testament where Jesus is referred to as the Son of Man. In Stephen's speech He is referred to as the Righteous One whom you [Jews] have now betrayed and murdered (Acts 7:52).

He [Stephen], full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God ... Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God (55-56).

Paul sends a word of encouragement about the *righteous judgment of God*" and His kingdom (**2 Thes.1:5**) to the believers in Thessalonica who were suffering persecution for their faith in Christ (**4, 6**).

when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day [judgment day, the day of the Lord] ... (7b-10a)

In the opening chapter of Revelation, John greets the seven churches in Asia,

from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, He is coming [going to come] with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him, and all tribes of the earth will wail [mourn] on account of Him (Rev.1:4-7).

Here Jesus, who had come and given His life for our redemption, is again pictured as coming in judgment - a certain and future event.

I was in the Spirit...and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet ... Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around His chest. The hairs of His head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, His feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and His voice was like the roar of

many waters. In His right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades (10-18).

Seven trumpets herald judgment upon the inhabitants of Earth, and the last to sound proclaims victory.

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were voices in heaven saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. (11:15)

Finally Christ is depicted as king harvesting the earth's inhabitants in the fullness of time. It is the very end of the age when He gathers His own and consigns the rest to Hell.

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe. So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped. Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe. So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God (14:14-19).

So ends the long war mankind has waged against God and His Messiah as David king of prophesied.

The LORD says to my Lord: Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool. The LORD sends forth from your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head. (Ps.110)

The outcome never was in doubt.

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us. He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, As for me, I have set my King on , my holy hill. I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in

pieces like a potter's vessel. Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. (**Ps.2**)